Such a union might effect that national independence which Lower Italy was groping towards.

At least the subject towns of Apulia looked to an alliance with the Lombard dukes for the ousting of the Byzantines. Already in 929 there had been an Apulian revolt which was not suppressed for five years; Capua and Salerno had joined in against the Greeks, and for a while brought Lucania and the upper portions of Apulia and Calabria under Lombard sovereignty.

Once again such a combination, but of a lasting effect, took shape. In 1009 Bari revolted against the Greeks; Melus, a member of the civic aristocracy, appeared as the leader of the rising. All Apulia followed; a succession of bad harvests, of Moslem pirate-raids on the coast, had exasperated beyond endurance a people already murmuring under the tributes, the customs dues, the rents, the burdens of military and naval service which Greek rule imposed upon the towns. It was a revolt led by the petty noblesse and official classes of the Apulian towns, who aimed at the complete overthrow of the Greek authority whose demands, in themselves not excessive, were hateful as being imposed by a foreign power. That they

were conscious of its being a war of Lombard
against Greek it would be going far to affirm, but
the junction of the rebels with the Lombard
dynasts soon gave it a racial complexion, and both
felt for the Greeks some of that contempt which
every healthy Westerner very unjustly entertained.